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ABSTRACT

In view of federal legislation being proposed for the reauthorization of the Adult Education Act that promotes increased program accountability and benchmarking of learner outcomes, this publication has been prepared as part of an effort to document student achievement in Iowa. Based on studies that have taken place over the past 17 years, this manual presents basic skills certification guidelines for Iowa's community college adult basic education program and background information about their development. Information is provided about the following: what has been learned through other states, accountability and Iowa's statewide accountability system; Iowa's Basic Skills Certification Program, certification guidelines, certification levels, target populations, and computer software [Tracking Outcomes for Programs and Students (TOPSpro)] used in the process. Skills levels and descriptions with standard and certification scaled score ranges for reading and mathematics, using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), are provided. The manual contains 21 references and two appendixes: (1) a chronological listing of adult basic education and general educational development accountability studies from 1980-1997, with their status and impact; and (2) samples of Iowa's basic skills certificates of achievement for CASAS Levels A-D in reading and mathematics. (KC)

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Iowa Department of Education
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation

August 1997

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Basic Skills Certification Manual:

Guidelines for Iowa's Adult Basic Education Program

Iowa Department of Education
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation

August 1997

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Foreword

Today, there is widespread concern about accountability, program results and long-term impact of participation in programs funded with federal dollars. The Adult Education Act speaks to documenting learning gains and the United States Department of Education has provided model indicators around learning gains. The National Council of State Directors of Adult Education has voluntarily agreed to report program results even if national reporting is not mandated in new adult education legislation.

In 1996, the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium, Inc. composed of state directors formed a special interest group to address basic skills certification. The goal of providing guidance to states around the certification of learning gains is the focus of this group.

Couple the accountability/results issue with current national trends and major public policy implications unfold. Nationally, three trends are propelling adult education program delivery. These are:

> *Mindware Explosion* where learning is as important in adulthood as it is in childhood because the development of new knowledge and information is growing so rapidly that learning has become a continuous, lifelong necessity.
>
> *Customization and Personalization* of products and services to individualized use. Products and service must be specific to the needs of the customer and designed to be meaningful to them.
>
> *Results on Promises* – Customers want results and guarantees provided on the services they seek or they will take their business elsewhere.

In the face of these national trends, funding and public policy issues, basic skills certification systems are emerging as a means of individually reporting learning gains to students, celebrating learner achievement and documenting program results. I believe the work you are doing in developing a basic skills certification system confirms Iowa's commitment to accountability and student success. You are to be commended as you embark upon this quest for excellence. I wish you the best as you proceed with your plans. The nation is looking to you for continued leadership.

Fran Tracy-Mumford, Ph.D.
Chair, Basic Skills Certification Interest Group
National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium, Inc.
and Delaware State Director of Adult Education

Preface

Iowa's community college based adult basic education program has always strived to be accountable and to improve program quality. During the last several years (1980-1997), a series of research studies was completed to identify critical program issues and provide a research basis for program planning. (See *Appendix A for a chronological listing of research studies.*) One of the major issues identified was documenting student learning gains through the attainment of workforce and life skills competencies.

This publication represents another important step in resolving this issue. The awarding of competency-based basic skills certificates of achievement to identified target populations served by Iowa's adult basic education program will enhance the accountability and program improvement aspects. This initiative will also provide a source of pride and motivation for the recipients of these certificates.

Acknowledgments

This manual was completed through the guidance, interest, and assistance of many individuals who devoted their time, energy, expertise, enthusiasm, motivation, dedication, and vision in all areas of the basic skills certification project.

A special thank you is expressed to **Patricia Rickard**, Executive Director of CASAS, and **Jane Egüez**, lead trainer for CASAS. They provided input on the final draft of the descriptor statements for CASAS levels A-D in the areas of reading and mathematics.

A personal thank you is extended to a long time friend and professional colleague **Dr. Fran Tracy-Mumford**, State Director of Adult Education for Delaware. Fran is the national leader for the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium's (NAEPDC) efforts to investigate the area of basic skills certification. Fran also wrote the Foreword for this publication.

A special recognition is paid to Iowa's CASAS trainers who provided direction and expertise throughout the development of the certificate descriptors and disclaimer statements. Iowa's CASAS trainers are: (1) **Christine Case**, Western Iowa Tech Community College; Sioux City, Iowa, (2) **Mary Strom**, Northeast Iowa Area College; Dubuque, Iowa, and (3) **Cindy Burnside**, Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa, Iowa.

An extra special thank you is extended to **Pam Southworth**, and **Kay Nebergall**. Pam and Kay are the respective adult basic education coordinators at Iowa Western Community College; Council Bluffs, Iowa and Kirkwood Community College; Cedar Rapids, Iowa. They, in addition to Iowa's CASAS trainers, served as the initial pilot sites for implementing the issuance of basic skills certificates of achievement.

Finally, an extra kind word is extended to **Christine Case**, **Cindy Burnside**, and **Kay Nebergall** for their patience and tolerance in responding to the many impromptu telephone calls from the project director concerning various aspects of the project.

August 1997

John Hartwig, Ph.D.
Project Director
Iowa Department of Education
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to present Iowa's community college adult basic education program basic skills certification guidelines. This manual is intended for different target audiences including: (1) practitioners, (2) administrators, (3) policy makers, and (4) Iowa's literacy partners.

Overview

Ensuring program accountability by focusing on issues of program quality and evaluation has been an emphasis of the Adult Education Act (AEA) since passage of the 1988 AEA program amendments. Provisions of the National Literacy Act of 1991 further expanded accountability and evaluation requirements by mandating the establishment of state indicators of program quality. As a result of these provisions, states have focused their attention on determining:

- how to assess whether a local adult education program is succeeding;
- key variables related to student performance that should be measured; and
- the relationship between measuring student performance and the content of the instructional program.

The diversity of goals of adult learners, who mostly participate on a voluntary basis complicates efforts to ensure program accountability and to implement more rigorous evaluation strategies. As stated in the legislation, the goals of adult education programs are to:

Enable adults to acquire the basic educational skills necessary for literate functioning;

- provide these adults with sufficient basic education to enable them to benefit from job training and retraining programs and obtain and retain productive employment so that they might more fully enjoy the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- enable adults who so desire to continue their education to at least the level of secondary school.

Due to the diversity of learner goals and the voluntary nature of individual participation, there has been considerable flexibility in instruction within most adult education programs. Rather than following a formal curriculum package, programs typically use a variety of instructional materials, including materials that are either purchased from publishers or are developed by instructors themselves. Often these materials are not standardized across, or even within, sites of a single program.

Learner Recognition

Accompanying the movement toward specifying learner competencies for adult education students has been the establishment of procedures and processes for recognizing learner progress or completion of specific competencies. Five of the states where statewide learner competencies have been developed–Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Wisconsin and Oregon–have also established statewide procedures for recognizing learners who have achieved those competencies. In Connecticut, Florida and Washington, local programs are responsible for determining what recognition should be provided for adult learners.

Procedures for recognizing learners that have achieved certain competencies also exist or are planned in all of the states where learner competency and assessment systems are under development–Iowa, Kentucky, Texas, and West Virginia. In Kentucky, local programs have discretion over the award of certificates.

An impediment to state efforts to enhance program accountability and conduct evaluations is the status of learner assessments by local adult education programs. Administering standardized assessment instruments is not a priority for most programs; pretests are often administered only to participants whose literacy skills are considered to be at a sufficient level and very few programs have post-test data, even for learners remaining in a program for a substantial number of hours. Furthermore, standardized assessment instruments are often selected for ease of administration rather than because they reflect the content of what is being taught.

Ongoing concerns about program effectiveness, along with legislative proposals under consideration that may focus adult education into an employment-related basic skill program, are causing states to reconsider the individually-directed nature of adult education programs. Many states have undertaken activities to design a more accountable adult education program by developing consensus about what should be taught, designing a core adult education curriculum that often emphasizes employment-related basic skills, and identifying assessment instruments to measure what has been learned by participants.

Implications for Other States

The experience of these 12 states offer some valuable lessons for other states that are now or soon will be considering developing a statewide learner competency and assessment system.

Involve State and Local Stakeholders

A statewide learner competency and assessment system cannot be designed or successfully implemented without the involvement of local providers, including instructors and administrators. Active involvement of state and local personnel will help ensure that the competencies and curriculum developed are appropriate and will facilitate acceptance by local providers during the implementation phases.

It is equally important to involve other types of service providers, both from the state and local levels who have an interest in or involvement with adult basic skills. Among the programs that should be represented are JTPA, JOBS, employment services, Even Start, and correctional education.

When involving practitioners not associated with adult education, it is also important to recognize and acknowledge that for such a system to be successful, all service providers will have to view this as a collective effort and one that requires development of common culture, set of values, and program terminology. This is particularly important as human service agencies become more outcome based, and in preparation for potential funding cuts and shifts to block grant funding.

Recognize That Developing and Implementing a System Will Take Time

Designing and implementing a learner competency and assessment system is a complex undertaking that involves substantial changes in the way adult education instruction is provided, its content, as well as procedures for assessment. Successfully developing a new system requires a state to evaluate and assess how its statewide adult education program is operating. Sufficient time also needs to be devoted to field testing competency systems in local programs so that potential bugs can be worked out and instructors develop an understanding of the competencies and assessment. Also, it is essential to acknowledge that developing and implementing a learner competency and assessment system is a continuous process where "nothing is ever done."

Provide Local Staff with Sufficient Professional Development Activities

Implementing a learner competency and assessment system often requires local programs to provide instruction in a very different manner from traditional approaches, focusing on specific competencies that they want learners to achieve, and using different curricula and assessment instruments. Instructors, particularly part-time staff and volunteers, for example, may be reluctant to follow different assessment procedures and may need assistance in becoming familiar with the relationship between learner competencies, curriculum, and assessment measures. Instructors and administrators will need to be involved with sufficient and appropriate professional development activities if the system is to operate as intended. Such activities may include on-site training, regional training, or technical assistance (*Pelavin Research Institute*, 1996a, pp.1-2; 15-17).

Accountability

Iowa's community college based adult basic education program has always strived toward program accountability. The following characteristics define the nucleus of Iowa's statewide accountability system.

A Flexible Framework for Systemic Reform. A statewide accountability system is a mechanism for focusing on the results of investments in literacy and improving return on those investments. It is a powerful tool for systemic change—a guide for states just beginning the change process. It builds capacity in four specific areas within Iowa's statewide community college based adult basic education delivery system.

- **A literacy accountability system focuses efforts to achieve national and state goals**. A statewide literacy system that aims to enable adults to lead more productive lives must be aligned with larger state and federal human resource and economic development goals. Developing a statewide accountability system to measure progress toward these goals requires interagency cooperation, program collaboration, coordination service delivery strategies, and the integrated effort of all stakeholders in the system.

- **It measures progress by measuring results, not process**. Federal and state reporting systems have focused in the past on inputs such as the number of clients/students enrolled or the number of hours they attended classes. Such measures tell us little about the real value of the program. A state accountability system guides a state towards defining what it wants to achieve—real changes in people's lives.

- **An accountability system that links literacy to broader state goals puts in place a management information system that enables agencies to streamline reporting and share information**. A state accountability system provides a mechanism for agreement on common definitions and elements, and encourages the use of compatible electronic databases to centralize information for easy access and updating. Centralized information about programs makes possible one-stop program shopping. Centralized participant files allow students to relocate without losing their records.

- **It ensures the continuous improvement of programs towards 100% results**. A state literacy accountability system provides information to program managers about how well their programs work and to state policymakers about the effectiveness of their policies. States can build on programs and strategies that work, discontinue those that don't, and isolate problems that need alternative strategies, not additional resources (*National Institute for Literacy*, 1995, pp. 4-7).

A Statewide Accountability System

A state accountability system helps Iowa's adult basic education local programs know how they are doing in:

- moving toward national and state goals for literacy and lifelong learning;
- building knowledge and skills for adults to compete in a global economy;
- building knowledge and skills to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- building knowledge and skills to assure that parents are participants in their children's education.

Adult Learners, who become active participants in their learning process, gain easier access to the system, learn up front about program alternatives, define their own goals, and choose the programs to meet these goals.

- **As Parents:** They set a good example; help children with moral, social, and intellectual development; become independent of financial aid.
- **As Workers:** They get, keep and upgrade jobs; become more flexible workers; teach and learn from others in the workplace; and contribute to the productivity of the organization, the community, the state, and the nation.
- **As Citizens:** They become informed citizens; participate in the political process; contribute to the community to the community's development; gain citizenship; and vote.

Service Providers, who know what performance is expected, are able to track progress toward goals, and gain greater accountability for results. Streamlined reporting requirements mean they spend less time on paperwork and more on client needs.

State Agencies, who can share resources and information with other state agencies to consolidate and streamline existing programs. This information is necessary to evaluate and improve programs by identifying barriers and providing incentives for more effective policy and program development.

State and Federal Legislators, who are able to link literacy outcomes to broader state and national policies, and gain a better understanding of the value of investment in literacy.

All Citizens, who see their tax dollars producing efficient and effective literacy programs that yield good neighbors, better co-workers and contributing community members.

The following steps define the process to establish a statewide literacy accountability system:

- define vision and benchmarks;
- define policy outcomes;
- identify performance measures for policy outcomes;
- define program outcomes related to policy outcomes;
- identify program performance measures;
- identify target populations related to policy and program outcomes;
- compare existing service delivery patterns with needs;
- collect data and communicate results to various literacy stakeholders;
- use information to improve program interventions; and
- use information to adjust resources and policies (*National Institute for Literacy*, 1995, pp. 4-7).

The Iowa Adult Basic Education Accountability System

Perspective

A significant percentage of adult education services in Iowa are delivered through the community college adult and continuing education system. There are 15 community colleges that provide continuing education programs to approximately 400,000 adult students annually. Within the continuing education delivery system, approximately 38,000-42,000 Iowa adults are served in Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), General Educational Development (GED) preparation, and Adult High School Diploma classes. Coordination is provided through the Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation, Iowa Department of Education.

In delivering services, Iowa's community college adult basic education programs coordinate with literacy partners that include community-based organizations, prisons, public libraries and other agencies that offer courses for adult learners. A number of specialized employment training programs are funded through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and through Promise JOBS, Iowa's welfare reform program. These programs are coordinated by the Iowa Department of Employment Services and the Iowa Department of Human Services, respectively. Other state agencies and programs, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Elder Affairs, Public Libraries, Developmental Education programs, Homeless Education programs, and Community Education programs also are involved in providing adult education or in making referrals to adult education programs.

One of the main reasons adults enroll in Iowa's community college adult and continuing education programs is to upgrade their vocational and job-related skills. Approximately 230,000 adults enroll in adult vocational training or retraining courses each year. These adults, in turn, significantly contribute to the economic development of their local communities. Raising their level of education also allows them to benefit more fully from the quality of life for which Iowa has established a national reputation (CASAS, 1995a, p.3).

Iowa has established a customized, statewide competency system based on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Competency List. Findings from the research of Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) were used to support the assumption that basic skills should be assessed and taught in context. To provide guidance for developing a research-based curriculum and assessment system that would improve program effectiveness and accountability for Iowa's adult basic education programs, Iowa conducted the

Iowa Adult Basic Skills Survey (IABSS) in 1993-94.[1] The IABSS asked five basic groups of respondents (business and industry, employment service providers, instruction providers, learners, and others) to rate the importance of 55 specific competencies. Priority-level rankings were generated to explore the relative importance of the competencies.

In 1993, seven sites started a pilot implementation of the CASAS in adult basic education and employability services programs. A task force consisting largely of community college program representatives familiar with the CASAS system provided guidance in the development stage of this implementation effort. The pilot test supported the suitability of the CASAS system in Iowa's adult education program.

Competencies and Their Assessment

Use of the competencies is not mandated statewide and is not linked to a statewide curriculum. However, Iowa provides all of the adult basic education service providers with competency priority lists and encourages the development of curricula and assessment for these competencies by local programs.

The IABSS identified *basic communication* as the top competency area, followed by *learning to learn employment, and health.* The following list delineates the 11 competencies designated as top priority level across survey respondent groups:

- communicate in general interpersonal interactions;
- communicate effectively in the workplace;
- communicate regarding personal information;
- demonstrate effectiveness in working with people;
- demonstrate ability to use thinking skills;
- understand basic principles of getting a job;
- use problem solving skills;
- use language of clarification;
- compute using whole numbers;
- understand job performance concepts and materials; and
- practice organizational and time management skills (CASAS, 1995a, p. 18).

Assessment Instruments

CASAS is the primary assessment system that is recommended for use with the identified competencies; however, programs also use the TABE and ABLE for reporting purposes, as well as a variety of other standardized and informal measures such as the WRAT, SORT, personal observations, oral presentations, role playing, writing assessment, video feedback, and life simulation scenarios. In consultation with CASAS staff, Iowa has adopted the Employability Competency System (ECS) Appraisal Form 130 as the statewide common assessment appraisal.

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[1]The reader is referred to the bibliography for a complete listing of the three publications contained in the IABSS series. The three publications were developed by CASAS.

Competencies are grouped according to the CASAS levels. The state has created a system to document attainment of competencies and award basic skills certificates of achievement.

Challenges/Lessons Learned

Iowa cautions states who plan to modify their existing adult education systems not to assume that the entire system needs an overhaul. Instead, Iowa recommends that states systematically and honestly evaluate the current functioning of their system to identify areas in which the programs excel and areas that would benefit from change. Other lessons learned during the process of identifying the priority competencies included: (1) recognizing that the change process is long term and develop a long-range plan to accomplish goals; and (2) basing change on research, including knowledge about learner needs and accomplishments (*Pelavin Research Institute*, 1996a, pp. A-16; A-18).

Quality Indicators and Benchmarks

Iowa translated many of its quality indicators into benchmarks to assess whether the state's 15 community colleges, which provide adult education instruction, are achieving long-range strategic goals. The state established a total of 29 benchmarks in the areas of educational gains., program planning, curriculum and instruction, staff development, support services and recruitment/retention. Each benchmark describes a measure and a target for the year 2000 and a second target for 2005. For example, for educational gains, one benchmark is the "Percentage of adults 18 years and over who have attained a high school or equivalent diploma: 85% for 2000 and 90% for 2005." The state designated 16 of the benchmarks as "core" benchmarks to identify the basic values inherent in the adult basic education program. The benchmarks will be used to guide program policy and priorities, demonstrate program effectiveness and quality to identify areas needing continued improvement through technical assistance.[2]

The state will obtain the benchmark measures from multiple sources. Student educational gain, for example, will be drawn from the state's management information system. Many of the program measures, such as for the planning process, will come from program monitoring. Broader measures, such as the overall literacy levels in the state, will require the state to conduct research studies to assess progress. The benchmark system was initiated in 1996 and will be monitored annually by the state education office.

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[2]The reader is referred to the publications entitled *Performance Indicators of Program Quality for Iowa's Adult Basic Education Programs* (May 1993) and *Benchmarks for Adult Basic Education Programs in Iowa's Community Colleges* (March 1996) for a thorough discussion of the development of Iowa's adult basic education program performance standards and benchmarks.

Development of the Benchmarks

The state used the same committee that developed the quality indicators, measures and standards to develop the benchmarks. The committee, was composed of state education staff and the basic education coordinators of the state's community colleges. Separate subcommittees worked on each benchmark.

Impact on State Accountability System

With its development of benchmarks, the adult education program is at the forefront of the program accountability process in Iowa. The benchmarks clearly communicate to other agencies and audiences what adult education is doing, its direction and what it plans to accomplish. The benchmarks also help the local programs deal with their college administration in explaining the program and maintaining its visibility.

Making the Process Work

Local program coordinators themselves, in collaboration with the state, developed the indicators and benchmarks. This local involvement insured the understanding and acceptance of the measures and standards, as reflected in the benchmarks. Iowa's unique research base of information about student outcomes and its state literacy survey data enabled it to develop empirically based standards and benchmarks that are defensible and credible (*Pelavin Research Institute*, 1996b, pp. A-7; A-8).

Iowa's Basic Skills Certification Program

Given the current emphasis on benchmarking student learning gains and skills acquisition, Iowa's community college based adult basic education program initiated a program to issue basic skills certificates based on attainment of demonstrated competencies. Iowa's *Literacy/ABE Vision 2005* includes a vision statement which documents the necessity of issuing basic skills certificates. The vision statement indicates that "certificates of achievement will be awarded to adult basic education (ABE) students for attainment of predetermined levels of performance in selected subject areas (i.e. reading and mathematics)," (*Benchmarks*, 1996, p. 6).

This vision statement was translated into one of Iowa's ABE program core benchmarks. The benchmark states "by the year 2005 ninety percent of Iowa's adult basic education students' learning progress will be measured in terms of competency based outcomes", (*Benchmarks*, 1996, p. 10). The basic skills certificates provide the most visible means of documenting student performance and learning outcomes.

One of the major recommendations to emerge from Iowa's basic skills norming study was one that suggested that the adult basic education program should issue student certificates of achievement to benchmark learner gains and student performance. This recommendations states:

> "Iowa policy makers and adult education practitioners should use the information in this report to begin a dialogue on setting levels for granting certifications based on competency attainment of basic skills. The CASAS levels A through E, presented in this report, provide a reasonable model for certification levels" (*CASAS*, 1996, p. 51).

Purpose

The major purposes of Iowa's basic skills certification program are to:

- provide an incentive for student learning motivation;
- benchmarks student performance and learning gains based on competency attainment;
- establish a common language among literacy partners (i.e. JTPA, Promise JOBS, Workforce Development Centers, employers, vocational rehabilitation, welfare reform, etc.);
- document basic skills attainment for employers and others;
- furnish a significant data element for an outcomes based reporting system;
- develop an understandable method of communication to policy makers regarding student learning progress (i.e. legislators, administrators, etc.); and
- provide a standardized method of measuring program effectiveness.

Development of Iowa's Basic Skills Certification Program

Given the three research studies conducted in the IABSS series, the logical conclusion was to initiate a basic skills certification program for Iowa's community college based adult basic education program (*CASAS*, 1995a, 1995b, 1996). The following process was established to develop the basic skills certification program:

- A collaborative decision was initiated to issue Basic Skills Certificates of Achievement for the subject areas of reading and mathematics. The necessary research was in place to establish standard score ranges and certification levels in these two subject areas (*CASAS*, 1996).

- The certificates will be issued for CASAS levels A-D. A decision was made not to issue certificates for CASAS level E due to the fact that most persons functioning at this level are capable of receiving the Iowa High School Equivalency Diploma based on successful completion, by Iowa state standards, of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests).

- A committee consisting of Iowa's three CASAS trainers and experienced teachers, familiar with the CASAS competency based system, was chosen to review the general CASAS descriptor statements for CASAS levels A-D. The purpose was to develop descriptor statements specific to the basic literacy skills adult students could generally accomplish at specific CASAS levels in the areas of reading and mathematics. The committee also developed disclaimer statements indicating that an individual may possess additional skills not reflected in the descriptor statement for any given CASAS level.

- The general CASAS descriptor statements were reviewed by the committee in order to develop descriptor statements specific to reading and mathematics for CASAS levels A-D.

- The committee reviewed the descriptor and disclaimer statements three different times. Prior to each review, the input from the previous review was incorporated into the revised statement. After the committee had reached consensus, the statements were reviewed by the CASAS staff.

- The input from the CASAS staff was incorporated into the final draft of the descriptor and disclaimer statements (*refer to Figures 1, 2 and Appendix B*).

Figure 1

CASAS Reading Skills Levels and Descriptions
with Standard and Certification Scaled Score Ranges

CASAS Basic Skills Level	CASAS Standard Score Range	CASAS Certification Level Scaled Score Range	CASAS Reading Skill Level Descriptor Statements
A	<200	195 to 200	Individuals at this level generally can read numbers, letters, simple words, and phrases related to immediate needs. Other skills may include reading and following directions found on signs and directories. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that require basic oral communication skills.
B	201 to 220	215 to 220	Individuals at this level generally can handle basic reading tasks related to their life roles. Other skills may include: reading and interpreting simplified and real-life materials on familiar topics; interpreting simple charts, graphs, maps, labels and menus; following basic written instructions and diagrams. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that involve following basic oral communications or simple written instructions.
C	221 to 235	230 to 235	Individuals at this level generally can handle most routine reading tasks related to their life roles. Other skills may include: interpreting routine charts, graphs, maps, labels, and menus; reading and interpreting a simple employee handbook; interpreting a pay stub; following multi-step diagrams and written instructions. Individuals at this level may be successful in jobs that involve following basic oral communications, simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at this level generally are able to begin General Education Development (GED) preparation.
D	236 to 245	240 to 245	Individuals at this level generally can perform tasks that involve written instructions in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. Other skills may include: reading and following multi-step directions; reading and interpreting manuals and legal forms; interpreting literary materials such as poetry and literature; creating and using tables and graphs; integrating information from multiple texts, charts, and graphs; evaluating and organizing information. They can also organize information and perform tasks that involve workplace communication skills. Persons at this level generally are able to successfully complete appropriate sections of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests).

Reading Disclaimer Statement: This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in reading using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills generally achieved at CASAS Level (A) (B) (C) (D). Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Figure 2

CASAS Mathematics Skills Levels and Descriptions
with Standard and Certification Scaled Score Ranges

CASAS Basic Skills Level	CASAS Standard Score Range	CASAS Certification Level Scaled Score Range	CASAS Mathematics Skill Level Descriptor Statements
A	<200	195 to 200	Individuals at this level generally can add and subtract whole numbers. Other skills may include: interpreting clock time; counting and converting money. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that involve tasks such as counting items.
B	201 to 220	215 to 220	Individuals at this level generally can add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers. Other skills may include: interpreting simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpreting a basic payroll stub; interpreting clock time; counting, converting, and using money, interpreting restaurant menus and computing related costs. Individuals at this level generally can handle jobs that involve following basic oral communications or simple written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs.
C	221 to 235	230 to 235	Individuals at this level generally can handle most computational tasks related to their life roles. Other skills may include: adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing whole numbers; interpreting routine charts, graphs, and labels; interpreting a payroll stub; reconciling a bank statement and completing calculations on a simple order form. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that involve following basic oral communications and simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at this level generally are able to begin General Educational Development (GED) preparation.
D	236 to 245	240 to 245	Individuals at this level generally can add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Other skills may include using mathematics in the workplace, such as calculating discounts; comparing prices to determine the best buys for goods and services; creating and using tables and graphs; computing standard measurement for length, width, perimeter, and area. They generally can organize, implement and perform multi-level calculations. Persons at this level generally are able to successfully complete appropriate sections of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests).

Mathematics Disclaimer Statement: This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in mathematics using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills generally achieved at CASAS Level (A) (B) (C) (D). Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

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Certification Guidelines

The following guidelines are in effect for the issuance of competency-based Basic Skills Certificates of Achievement.

- A certificate will be issued by the local ABE program when a student has successfully met the certification level through pre-post assessment procedures at each CASAS basic skills level (*refer to Figures 1 and 2*).

- The certification information should be entered into the student record utilizing the TOPSpro software. This information needs to be updated each time a student is issued a certificate. Given the current version of the TOPSpro software, the information will need to be "hand entered" (as opposed to scanning) into the "notes" section of the student's record. (*Refer to the "TOPSpro Quick Start" manual for technical information on how to enter the certification information in the "notes" section of the student's file.*) The following information should be entered: (1) level of achievement (i.e. CASAS Reading Level B; CASAS Math Level D), (2) date(s) the certificate was issued, (3) name of the instructor/trainer who issued the certificate.

- The only certificates to be issued will be competency attainment in the subject areas of reading and mathematics. Other certificates may be issued at a later date when research is available on other areas such as writing skills, listening skills, etc.

- Duplicate certificates may be issued upon request. However, the certificate should have the word "duplicate" indicated.

- Local program procedures need to be established concerning the issuance of basic skills certificates (i.e. when certificates are issued, signatories, state reporting procedures, issuance of duplicate certificates, verification of certificates, etc.)

- Certificates should not be issued for initial assessment results based on the CASAS/ECS 130 appraisal form. Certificates should only be issued for demonstrated performance on diagnostic pre-post assessment procedures.

Certification Levels

The certification level standard score ranges were established at the 85 percent probability level for each CASAS level A-D.[3] This means that any given individual has an 85 percent chance of

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[3]The certification levels were established in conjunction with various research studies depicting the relationships among several nationally normed standardized scales. The reader is referred to the publication entitled, *A Workforce Basic Skills Norming Study of Iowa's JTPA and Promise JOBS Target Populations* (1996) for a thorough discussion of the research studies.

performing the tasks listed for any given descriptor at any given CASAS level *(refer to figures 1 and 2)*. This high probability level insures that the integrity, reliability, and consistency of the basic skills certification program is insured.

Target Populations

The following target populations have been identified, through a secondary analysis of the Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS) data, as priority populations for adult basic education and vocational training (*Beder, 1995*). The six priority populations are: 1) able-bodied welfare recipients (AWR), 2) low-wage earners who were not recipients of public assistance (LWW), 3) at-risk youth (ARY), 4) persons for whom English was their second language and who were not literate in English (ESL), 5) high school dropouts with relatively high education attainment (HiDrp) and 6) least educated public school dropouts (LoDrp). These target populations are defined as follows:

- **Able-bodied welfare recipients (AWR)**. Persons who received AFDC or food stamps and who did not have disabilities which prevented them from working. Able-bodied welfare recipients, including women caring for young children, represent about 7.4 percent of the Iowa adult population and about three-quarters of the Iowa adult population receiving welfare.

- **Low-wage earners who were not recipients of public assistance (LWW)**. Adults who did not receive AFDC or food stamps and were employed full-time at, or below, the minimum wage. This population constitutes about 8.4 percent of the Iowa adult population.

- **At-risk youth (ARY)**. Persons age 16 to 21 who had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled in school. At-risk youth comprises approximately .6 percent of the Iowa population age 16 and over.

- **Persons for whom English was their second language (ESL)**. Persons who indicated on the IASALS that they would not speak or write in English. The ESL population constitutes about 1.4 percent of the Iowa adult population.

- **Dropouts with relatively high educational attainment (HiDrp)**. Persons who dropped out of high school during eleventh grade. This population makes up about 3.1 percent of the Iowa adult population.

- **Least educated school dropouts (LoDrp)**. Persons whose educational attainment was grade ten or less. LoDrp comprises about 1.7 percent of the Iowa adult population (*Beder, 1995, pp. 1-2*).

Collectively, the priority target populations comprise 22.6 percent of Iowa's adult population. They constitute a significant percentage of Iowa's total adult population to be served through Iowa's adult basic education program.

Iowa's basic skills certification program can also be utilized with additional target populations including:

- incarcerated persons;
- institutionalized persons; and
- persons located in Iowa's Workforce Development Centers.

TOPSpro Software

Tracking Outcomes for Programs and Students (TOPSpro) is designed to automate the collection and reporting of learner demographics and outcomes. TOPSpro software runs in a Windows environment and requires an answer sheet scanner to collect data. It is also possible to hand enter all data. TOPSpro provides more than twenty-five reports that offer both flexibility and customization.

For example, when tracking progress, the user can specify test date or test date ranges, form number or form number series, as well as scale score range. In addition, the user can choose whether to report by student name, student identification, or both, and whether to sort by student name, student identification, test date, form or score. Reports are also available at the individual, classroom, and agency level. Outcomes are reported in the following areas:

- test performance;
- progress reports;
- outcomes profile;
- demographic summary;
- competency achievement;
- student educational history; and
- class roster and teacher roster.

TOPSpro requires the use of two separate answer sheets:

- **Entry/Update Record**. The front side collects student demographic and program level information at time of entry into program. The reverse side collects outcomes related to progress in program.

- **Student Test Record**. This sheet is used each time a student takes a test. If it is necessary to scan CASAS appraisals with TOPSpro, TOPSpro Student Test Record answer sheet must be used. It has front and back which allows you to administer two tests. The number of test administrations that TOPSpro will allow you to track for a particular student is unlimited.

Summary

The federal legislation being proposed for the reauthorization of the Adult Education Act for the twenty-first century contains several provisions relating to increased program accountability and benchmarking of learner outcomes. The proposed legislation promotes high standards for learner achievement and includes strong accountability provisions, such as developing a system of "performance goals" for student achievement that would be determined by each state. Performance goals for adult education and literacy programs could include the following:

- establishing measurable goals for client outcomes;
- providing learning in 'real life' contexts;
- coordinating with other resources in the community;
- offering flexible schedules and support services; and
- issuing basic skills certificates.

The implementation of Iowa's basic skills certification initiative provides another pro-active measure to meet the literacy needs of the state's eligible adult target populations.

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Appendix A

A Chronological Listing of Adult Basic Education and General Educational Development Accountability Studies (1980-1997)

A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
1. The GED Experience: Reaching Out to People (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed July 1982	Evaluated the effectiveness of Iowa's GED delivery system.
2. Bright Horizons: Iowa GED Writing Skills Pilot Project Final Report (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed July 1985 (ED 256-956)	Determined the feasibility of including an essay component on the GED examinations.
3. Iowa's Literacy/Adult Basic Education Target Population Studies (Iowa Dept. of Education)		
A. Iowa's Adult Basic Education Students: Descriptive Profiles Based on Motivations, Cognitive Ability and Socio-Demographic Variables.	Completed May 1987 (ED 290-048)	Determined the marketing and motivational characteristics of adult basic education students and reasons for attending the Adult Basic Education program.
B. Iowa's ESL Students: A Descriptive Profile.	Completed December 1987 (ED 290-049)	Determined the motivational and marketing characteristics of Iowa's ESL students enrolled in Adult Basic Education programs.
C. Reasons for Nonparticipation Among Iowa's Adults Who Are Eligible for ABE.	Completed March 1989 (ED 306-426)	Documented the reasons that adults who are eligible for Adult Basic Education programs choose not to participate.

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A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
4. ABE/GED in Community Colleges: A Status Report (U.S. Dept. of Education)	Completed June 1988	Determine the characteristics of effective community college ABE/GED programs in those states that utilize community colleges for their primary delivery system.
5. Iowa's Norming Study of the Tests of General Educational Development (Iowa Depart. of Education)	Completed October 1989 (ED 314-474)	Documented the performance level of Iowa's GED candidates in relationship to a norm group of Iowa's graduating high school seniors.
6. Assessing the Educational Needs of Iowa's Homeless Youth and Adults (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed December 1989	Determined the number of Iowa's adult homeless and their educational needs.
7. Assessment and Adult Basic Education: The Iowa Model (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed May 1990 (ED 321-028)	Determined the current assessment procedures utilized in Iowa's Adult Basic Education programs as part of a measure of Iowa's educational accountability.
8. Continuing Education Outcomes at Iowa's Community Colleges (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed April 1991 (ED 331-560)	Provide outcome measures for Iowa's Adult and Continuing Education programs in the community colleges.

A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
9. Labor Supply in Iowa: Policies for Economic Growth (University of Iowa)	Completed March 1991	Documented the status of Iowa's labor market in relation to formulation of policies for economic growth.
10. Relationship of the GED Test to Skills Needed in the Workplace (GEDTS).	Completed 1991	Provided documentation of the basic skills needed in the workplace and the comparable skills measured by the GED Tests.
11. A Two, Five and Ten-Year Follow-Up of Iowa's GED Graduates. (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed April 1992 (ED 344-047)	Provide accountability as to the immediate, intermediate and long-range impact of Iowa's GED instructional and testing program.
12. GED Profiles: Adults in Transition (GEDTS)	Completed 1992	A series of six reports that present information about adult learners compiled from a national survey of people who took the GED Tests.
13. Outcomes of GED Graduation: An Annotated Bibliography of Research Reports. (University of Georgia)	Completed December 1992	An annotated bibliography designed to document the outcomes of GED graduates.
14. Development of performance indicators of program effectiveness. (Iowa Dept. of Education)	Completed May 1993	Provided performance indicators of program effectiveness in serving the literacy needs of Iowa's adult population.

A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
15. National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) (Educational Testing Service)	Completed 1993	Measure and estimate the literacy abilities of Americans aged 16-64, according to race, ethnicity, levels of education, gender, and other significant variables.
16. National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs (U.S. Dept. of Education: Developmental Associates, Inc.)	Completed 1994	Evaluation of the potential of national programs supported by the Adult Education Act.
17. Iowa's Adult Basic Education Programs: A Survey of Learner Demographics and Preliminary Skill Levels. (CASAS: San Diego, CA)	Completed September 1993	Initial evaluation of Iowa's Adult Basic Education target populations utilizing the CASAS appraisal instruments.
18. Iowa Adult Basic Skills Survey. (CASAS: San Diego, CA)	Completed March 1994	Determine the priority competency areas for basic life and employability skills needed by Iowa's adult population.
19. Adult Literacy in Iowa: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey [IASALS]. (Educational Testing Service)	Completed February 1994 (ED 373-110)	Measure and estimate the literacy abilities of Iowans aged 16+, according to race, ethnicity, levels of education, gender, and other significant variables.

A CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF CONTINUING EDUCATION/ADULT BASIC EDUCATION/ GED ACCOUNTABILITY STUDIES

STUDY	STATUS	IMPACT
20. Graphic Supplement for the Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey. (IA Dept. of Education)	Completed March 1994 (ED 370-964)	A graphic supplement for the IASALS Report.
21. Iowa CASAS Pilot Project Reports. (IA Dept. of Education)	Completed September 1994 (ED 385-318)	An initial evaluation of CASAS effectiveness in Iowa's Adult Basic Education Programs.
22. "Iowa Adult Literacy Profiles" Newsletter Series. (Hal Beder: Rutgers University)		A series of newsletters documenting the secondary analysis of the Iowa State Adult Literacy Survey (IASALS) study.
A. An Overview of NALS & IASALS in relation to adult literacy target populations.	Completed November 1994 (Volume 1; No. 1)	A policy analysis of potential target population(s) for literacy education in Iowa.
B. The Economics of Adult Literacy in Iowa	Completed February 1995 (Volume 1: No. 2)	A policy analysis of literacy scores in relation to socio-economic variables.
C. Iowa's Adult Basic Education Priority Target Populations	Completed August 1995 (Volume 1: No. 3)	A policy analysis of five priority populations for adult basic education and vocational training.

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A CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF CONTINUING EDUCATION/ADULT BASIC EDUCATION/ GED ACCOUNTABILITY STUDIES

STUDY	STATUS	IMPACT
23. Making the Grade: Keys to Success on the Job in the 90's. (ACT Center for Education and Work)	Completed February, 1995	Identify and define the skills and knowledge employees must have to succeed in the workforce.
24. The Iowa Adult Basic Skills Survey. (CASAS: San Diego, CA)	Completed April 1995 (ED 389-956)	A statewide study to determine the priority competency areas for basic skills and employability skills needed by Iowa's adults based on the CASAS competency system.
A. Assessment of Basic Skills Competencies in Iowa's Employment and Workforce Programs (CASAS: San Diego, CA)	Completed November 1995 (ED 389-955)	The purpose of this study was to provide direction for assessment policy and practice in employability and workforce education and training programs serving youth and adult learners in Iowa. The primary objective was to identify existing assessment instruments that can be used during the initial intake/screening process to efficiently measure the basic skills competencies rated as most essential on the Iowa Adult Basic Skills Survey (IABSS).
B. A Workforce Basic Skills Norming Study of Iowa's JTPA and Promise JOBS Target Populations. (CASAS: San Diego, CA)	Completed October 1996 (ED 400 437)	A norming study of Iowa's JTPA and Promise JOBS populations designed to develop a customized appraisal instrument to identify an appropriate range of workplace basic skills.

A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
25. Synthetic Estimates of Adult Literacy Proficiencies for Regions of Iowa. (Steve Reder: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL): Portland, OR)	Completed June 1995 (ED 385-714)	A report providing synthetic literacy estimates of Iowans aged 16+ by census Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA's).
26. Iowa CASAS Pilot Project Reports. (IA Dept. of Education)	Completed September 1995	A second year evaluation of CASAS effectiveness in Iowa's Adult Basic Education Programs.
27. Examining the Impact of Programs Funded by the Adult Education Act. (NAEPDC, Wash.: DC)	Completed November 1995	Documents the national impact of Adult Education Act programs from the accountability research conducted over the past 15 years (1980-1995). A total of 30 state and national impact studies were analyzed.
28. National Evaluation of the Section 353 Set-Aside for Teacher Training and Innovation in Adult Education (RMC Research Corporation, Portsmouth, NH)	Completed December 1995	The central purpose of this evaluation is to provide a comprehensive picture of the federal and state systems in place for funding, designing, implementing, and disseminating Section 353-funded activities, and to systematically examine the types of projects funded.

A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
29. The Role of Community College Adult and Continuing Education in Iowa's Workforce Development Centers. (Iowa Association of Adult and Continuing Education)	Completed January 1996 (ED 396 109)	A position paper to address the role of Iowa's community college continuing education divisions within the infrastructure of Iowa's Workforce Development Centers.
30. Benchmarks for Adult Basic Education Programs in Iowa's Community Colleges. (Iowa's Adult Basic Education Coordinators: Des Moines, IA)	Completed March 1996 (ED 396 108)	This publication identifies Iowa's community colleges adult basic education program benchmarks for base year 1995 with projections for target years 2000 and 2005.
31. Iowa Workforce Training Study: Impact of Iowa's Community College Continuing Education Programs. (National Council on Community Services and Continuing Education, Piedmont Community College; Charlotte, N.C.)	Completed April 1996 (ED 400 438)	A study to determine Iowa's workforce training and retraining needs and to determine the impact of present training and retraining programs offered by Iowa's community colleges in conjunction with business and industry.

A CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF CONTINUING EDUCATION/ADULT BASIC EDUCATION/ GED ACCOUNTABILITY STUDIES

STUDY	STATUS	IMPACT
32. *The Literacy Proficiencies of GED Candidates: Results from the GED-NALS Comparison Study*. (GED Testing Service; Washington, D.C.)	Completed January 1996	A study to determine the correlation(s) between performance on the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) and the General Educational Development (GED) Test Battery.
33. The GED Graduate: A View from a Connecticut Business and Inudstry Perspective. (Connecticut Department of Education: Middletown, CT)	Completed April 1996	A study to determine: 1. the general acceptance of the GED diploma as a high school credential in the initial hiring process; 2. the general knowledge of the GED testing program; and 3. the general attitudes toward GED graduates as employees.
34. Iowa CASAS Pilot Project Reports. (IA Dept. of Education)	Completed September 1996 (ED 400 436)	A third year evaluation of CASAS effectiveness in Iowa's Adult Basic Education Programs.

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A CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF CONTINUING EDUCATION/ADULT BASIC EDUCATION/ GED ACCOUNTABILITY STUDIES

STUDY	STATUS	IMPACT
35. *Literacy Behind Prison Walls: Profiles of the Prison Population from the National Adult Literacy Survey.* (Educational Testing Service: Princeton, NJ)	Completed October 1994	This report provides an in-depth look at the literacy skills of prisoners in state and federal prisons.
36. *Literacy, Economy and Society: Results of the First International Adult Literacy Survey.* (Statistics Canada: Ottawa, Ontario, Canada)	Completed December 1995	This report extends knowledge of the United States' adult literacy rates through comparative data from six nations including: Canada Germany The Netherlands Poland Sweden Switzerland.
37. *Literacy and Dependency: The Literacy Skills of Welfare recipients in the United States.* (Educational Testing Service: Princeton, NJ)	Completed 1995	This reports studied the literacy rates of United States' welfare recipients.

A CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF CONTINUING EDUCATION/ADULT BASIC EDUCATION/ GED ACCOUNTABILITY STUDIES

STUDY	STATUS	IMPACT
38. *Validation of Foundation Skills.* (Indiana Department of Education: Division of Adult Education: Indianapolis, IN)	Completed 1996	The Indiana Department of Education conducted a survey to determine the most critical skills and competencies needed by adult basic education learners. The survey was a step toward the refinement and improvement of the Indiana Program of Adult Competency Education (IN PACE). The purpose of this validation process was to assist adult education staff and learners in focusing instructional content on the most immediate demands of the learner's environment.
39. Iowa's Limited Benefit Plan: An Evaluation of Welfare Reform in Iowa. (Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., Washington, D.C. and the Institute for Social and Economic Development: Iowa City, Iowa.)	Completed May 1997.	This publication contains findings relative to the impact of Iowa's innovative welfare reform program initiated October 1, 1993. The objective of the Limited Benefit Plan (LBP) Study is to improve the understanding of the Family Investment Plan (FIP) cases that have been assigned to the LBP, thus helping policymakers in Iowa and around the nation to make well-informed decisions about modifying or adopting the plan.

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A Chronological Listing of Continuing Education/Adult Basic Education/ GED Accountability Studies

Study	Status	Impact
40. *Extending the Ladder: From CASAS to Work Keys Assessment.* (ACT and CASAS: Iowa City, IA and San Diego, CA)	Completed 1997	The purpose of this study was to provide educators, trainers, employers and employees with a common language and articulated assessments for communicating about basic and advanced workplace skills and the standards for measuring them.

Appendix B

Sample Copies of Iowa's Basic Skills Certificates of Achievement for CASAS Levels A-D in Reading and Mathematics

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level A in Reading

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

Emboss or Affix Seal Here

Date

College Official

Date

Document Not Official Unless Seal is Affixed or Embossed

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in reading using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level A. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can read numbers, letters, simple words, and phrases related to immediate needs. Other skills may include reading and following directions found on signs and directories. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that require basic oral communication skills.

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level B in Reading

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

College Official

EMBOSS OR AFFIX SEAL HERE

DOCUMENT NOT OFFICIAL UNLESS SEAL IS AFFIXED OR EMBOSSED

Date

Date

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in reading using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level B. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can handle basic reading tasks related to their life roles. Other skills may include: reading and interpreting simplified and real-life materials on familiar topics; interpreting simple charts, graphs, maps, labels and menus; following basic written instructions and diagrams. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that involve following basic oral communications or simple written instructions.

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level C in Reading

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

College Official

EMBOSS OR AFFIX SEAL HERE

DOCUMENT NOT OFFICIAL UNLESS SEAL IS AFFIXED OR EMBOSSED

Date

Date

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in reading using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level C. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can handle most routine reading tasks related to their life roles. Other skills may include: interpreting routine charts, graphs, maps, labels, and menus; reading and interpreting a simple employee handbook; interpreting a pay stub; following multi-step diagrams and written instructions.

Individuals at this level may be successful in jobs that involve following basic oral communications, simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at this level generally are able to begin General Education Development (GED) preparation.

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level D in Reading

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

Emboss or Affix Seal Here

Date

College Official

Date

Document Not Official Unless Seal is Affixed or Embossed

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in reading using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level D. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can perform tasks that involve written instructions in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. Other skills may include: reading and following multi-step directions; reading and interpreting manuals and legal forms; interpreting literary materials such as poetry and literature; creating and using tables and graphs; integrating information from multiple texts, charts, and graphs; evaluating and organizing information.

They can also organize information and perform tasks that involve workplace communication skills. Persons at this level generally are able to successfully complete appropriate sections of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests).

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level A in Mathematics

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

Emboss or Affix Seal Here

Date

College Official

Date

Document Not Official Unless Seal is Affixed or Embossed

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in mathematics using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level A. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can add and subtract whole numbers. Other skills may include: interpreting clock time; counting, and converting money. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that involve tasks such as counting items.

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level B in Mathematics

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

Emboss or Affix Seal Here

Date

College Official

Date

Document Not Official Unless Seal is Affixed or Embossed

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in mathematics using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level B. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers. Other skills may include: interpreting simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpreting a basic payroll stub; interpreting clock time; counting, converting, and using money; interpreting restaurant menus and computing related costs.

Individuals at this level generally can handle jobs that involve following basic oral communications or simple written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally. Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs.

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level C in Mathematics

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

College Official

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Date

Date

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This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in mathematics using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level C. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can handle most computational tasks related to their life roles. Other skills may include: adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing whole numbers; interpreting routine charts, graphs, and labels; interpreting a payroll stub; reconciling a bank statement and completing calculations on a simple order form.

Individuals at this level may be successful in entry-level jobs that involve following basic oral communications and simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at this level generally are able to begin General Educational Development (GED) preparation.

SAMPLE

Certificate of Achievement

Granted by

This Basic Skills Certificate recognizes that

SAMPLE

has successfully attained

Level D in Mathematics

in accordance with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Adult Basic Education Program

Instructor

College Official

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Date

Date

This individual has been awarded this Basic Skills Certificate of Achievement based on demonstrated performance in mathematics using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The following descriptor is indicative of the basic skills *generally achieved* at CASAS Level D. Individuals may possess additional skills that are not reflected in this descriptor.

Individuals at this level generally can add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Other skills may include: using mathematics in the workplace, such as calculating discounts; comparing prices to determine the best buys for goods and services; creating and using tables and graphs; computing standard measurement for length, width, perimeter, and area. They generally can organize, implement and perform multi-level calculations. Persons at this level generally are able to successfully complete appropriate sections of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests).

SAMPLE